





M. E. Barry.

I'LL TELL YOU WHAT.

A

C O M E D Y,

IN FIVE ACTS.

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I'LL TELL YOU WHAT.

A

C O M E D Y,

I N F I V E A C T S,

A S I T I S P E R F O R M E D

A T T H E T H E A T R E R O Y A L,

H A Y M A R K E T.

By Mrs. I N C H B A L D.

T H E S E C O N D E D I T I O N.

L O N D O N:

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P R O L O G U E.

Written by GEORGE COLMAN, Esquire.

Spoken by Mr. PALMER.

LADIES and Gentlemen, *I'll tell you what !*
Yet not, like antient prologue, tell the plot ;
But, like a modern prologue, try each way
To win your favour tow'rd's the coming play.
Our Author is a woman — that's a charm
Of power to guard herself and play from harm.
The Muses, Ladies Regent of the pen,
Grant women skill and force to write like Men.
Yet they, like the *Æolian* maid of old,
Their sex's character will ever hold :
Not with bold quill too roughly strike the lyre,
But with the *feather* raise a soft desire.

Our Poetess has gain'd sublimest heights :
Not Sappho's self has soar'd to nobler flights ;
For she, bright spirit, the first British fair,
Climb'd, unappall'd, the unsubstantial air ;
And here, beneath the changes of the moon,
Wond'ring, you saw her launch a grand Balloon * ;
While she, with steady course, and flight not dull,
Paid a short visit to the Great Mogul.
Shrink not, Nabobs ! Our Poetess to-night
Wakes not the genius of Sir Matthew Mite.
Beyond our hemisphere she will not roam,
Keeps in the line, and touches nearer home ;
Nay, will not, as before, howe'er you scorn her,
Reach e'en the Turnpike-gate at Hyde-park Corner.
But hold — I say too much — I quite forgot —
And so I'll tell you — No, — SHE'LL *tell you what.*

* Alluding to the farce of " The Mogul Tale, or Descent
of the Balloon," produced the year before by the Authoress.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

Major Cyprus,	Mr. PALMER.
Mr. Anthony Euston,	Mr. BENSLEY.
Colonel Downright,	Mr. AICKIN.
Charles Euston,	Mr. BANNISTER, Jun.
Sir George Euston,	Mr. WILLIAMSON.
Sir Harry Harmless,	Mr. R. PALMER.
Servants, Messrs. LEDGER, GAUDRY, and LYONS.	
Mr. Euston,	Mr. PARSONS.
Lady Euston,	Mrs. BULKLEY.
Lady Harriet Cyprus,	Mrs. BATES.
Bloom,	Mrs. RILEY.
A Young Lady,	Miss FARREN.

I'LL TELL YOU WHAT.

A C T I.

SCENE I.

A Room at Sir George Euston's.

[Enter Mr. Euston, followed by Sir George.]

Sir George.

BUT, my dear Uncle, why in such a passion?

Mr. Euston. I can't help it—I am out of all patience!—Did not I leave you one of the happiest men in the world?—

Sir George. Well, and so you find me, Sir.

Mr. Euston. 'Tis false—you are not happy—you can't be happy—'tis false—and you shan't be happy.

Sir George. If you are resolved to make me otherwise, Sir—

Mr. Euston. No, I am not resolved—'tis yourself that is resolved—Did not I leave you one of the happiest of men—married to one of the most beautiful women in the world;—Did not I give you my blessing and a large fortune, and did I not stay and see you father of a fine boy?

—Then only just went over to visit my estate in St. Kitt's, and, now I'm come back, here I find you married to another woman—and your first wife still *living*—and, egad, she is married to another man.

Sir George. Dear Uncle, I should certainly have asked your opinion and my Uncle Anthony's on the subject, but your absence put it out of my power, and it was universally believed the ship in which you sailed was lost.

Mr. Euston. Well, you'll hear what my brother will say to it.

Sir George. I trust, Sir, when I have explained every thing, you will not only think me worthy of your pardon, but even of being pleaded for to my Uncle.

Mr. Euston. Not I, indeed—Nay, were it in my power to do you any good, I would not—I shan't forgive you myself—much less ask him—But you are right in fixing on me for a mediator; my brother pays much regard to me truly—I have been of infinite service, to be sure, in reconciling him to his own poor boy. Nay, did he not even (for my brother Anthony would always be master, although he was the youngest) when I went to him to persuade him to forgive poor Charles, his son, did he not even (instead of my gaining him over and getting something for the poor boy) did not he even draw me into a promise never to do any thing for him myself?—My brother does what he pleases with me—but nobody else shall—No, what I want in resolution, to him, I make up in obstinacy, to other people.

Sir George. Sir, if you will but hear the just pleas I have to offer—

Mr. Euston. I will hear no pleas—What do you think my brother will say?—Why you inconsiderate boy! He had designed you for his heir!

Sir

Sir George. I should be as sorry, Sir, to excite his displeasure as I am at incurring yours; yet, give me leave to add, I should derive very little enjoyment from the possession of a fortune which his son, my poor cousin, (but for a single act of imprudence) had a right to expect. And be assured, Sir, that if this seeming indiscretion of mine, when compared with that of his son's, shou'd be regarded so unfavourably as to make *his* offence appear lighter to my Uncle, and move him to forgiveness—I will contentedly support the burden of his resentment.

Mr. Euston. Why now that's well spoken.—You silly young rogue, I am not angry with you for getting rid of your wife—(for that, I dare say, is what every sensible man in the world wou'd do if he cou'd) I am only angry with you for getting another—Cou'd not you know when you were well off, you blockhead?

Sir George. Dear Uncle, as you are a bachelor, and can only speak of wives from theory, suppose we drop the subject?—Is my Uncle Anthony come to his house? He knows nothing of the alteration that has taken place in my family, you tell me.—Should I wait on him, or do you think he will favour me with a visit first?

Mr. Euston. Now what a deal of ceremony!—'Tis a fine thing to *look* like a man of consequence. My brother Anthony has had more privileges from his looks than I ever had from being eldest son—even you, whom I love so well, and have given half my fortune to (and 'tis not long, you know, that you have expected a sixpence from Anthony) yet you never meet *him* without a low bow. “How do you do, Sir?—I hope you are well, Uncle!—I am glad to see you!”—And you stumble over *me* with—“So Uncle, how is it? how is it, Uncle?”—And when you invite us both, “Uncle
“ Anthony,

“ Anthony, I hope I shall have the *honour* of your
 “ company”—While you give *me* a nod, “ Uncle,
 I shall see you.”

Sir George. Dear Sir—

Mr. Euston. Nay, with every other person
 ’tis the same thing—If we are stuffed into a coach,
 with a little chattering pert Miss, “ Oh dear,
 “ Mr. Anthony Euston, you must not ride back-
 “ wards, here is room for *you* on this seat—and *Mr.*
 “ *Euston*, I know, will like one seat as well as ano-
 “ ther”—and then am I put with my back to the
 horses, though my head is whirling all the time
 like one of the coach wheels. Then if any thing
 be lost, or wanted, when no servant is by, “ Mr.
 “ *Anthony* Euston must not stir for the world—but
 “ *Mr. Euston*, they know, will be so kind as to go
 “ for it.”—And this is all because I am good na-
 tured. Egad! if this is my reward, no wonder
 there are so few in the world of my temper.

Sir George. But, dear Sir, no jesting—Does
 my uncle intend to call on me or not?

Mr. Euston. Yes, I dare say he *did* intend it;
 and, if he does not hear of what you have been
 doing, before he gets to your house, he will.

Sir George. Why then, my dear Uncle, will
 you step home, and give orders that none of the
 servants mention any thing to him this morning?

Mr. Euston. There now!—“ I step home and
 give orders!” There ’tis, again!--Wou’d you ask
 my brother to “ step home, and give orders?”
 No, I fancy not!--But I--poor I--will be so good as
 to do it--you think—But for once I won’t—Be-
 sides, Anthony never asks questions of servants.
 We inquired of our housekeeper, indeed, how
 you did last night; she told us both you and your
 Lady were well, and so we thought all safe. An-
 thony will ask no more questions; therefore you
 may

may have the pleasure of explaining matters to him yourself, as you have to me.

Sir George. I shou'd be sorry if any imperfect account shou'd reach him; for, so sincere is my respect for him, I wou'd not even suffer for a moment in his esteem. I will be with him in half an hour; but I am afraid—

Mr. Euston. No, no, he'll not be out, nor have had any company in that time—for my brother is no sailer, and he'll be too fond of the exchange of a bed for a-hammock to be stirring so soon. However, I think I *will* step home and give a caution to the servants that they don't mention your divorce to him.—As for myself, I'll keep out of his way—I'll not go near him---for I will say this for my brother, although it was never in my power to persuade him to forgive an injury or an indiscretion in my life, yet I never said to him, “ Brother Anthony, *don't* forgive a thing,” that he did not take my advice.

Sir George. But come, Uncle, walk into the parlour before you go—Let me introduce you to Lady Euston--Do step in and take your chocolate with her.

Mr. Euston. And, by the time I have taken a turn in the Park, and eaten a mouthful of dinner, you'll, perhaps, have a new Lady Euston to introduce me to, and I may drink tea with *her*.

Sir George. Well, Uncle, whether you stay or go, I must bid you a good morning, for I am obliged to attend a friend, who has a lawsuit depending, and I fear I shall be waited for—My presence won't be required long, and I'll be with my Uncle Anthony within half an hour.

Mr. Euston. Very well [*Going*] but you had better take an hour—Let me advise you to take an hour. Anthony is devilish sharp—he is not to

be imposed upon. Take an hour, or an hour and half, before you see him—Anthony is a deep man, he is not to be deceived—for, I dare say, in his time, he has been as idle as yourself.—And I *will* go on your errand.

[*Exeunt Mr. Euston and Sir George, separately.*]

S C E N E II.

An Apartment at Major Cyprus's.

Lady Harriet Cyprus, and Bloom waiting.

Lady Harriet. Married!

Bloom. Yes, my lady, as sure as death.

Lady Harriet. Amazing! It cannot be.

Bloom. O yes, my Lady, I have known of it these three months; but, as they kept out of town till within this fortnight, and your Ladyship has been abroad most of that time, I thought I would not tell your Ladyship till we returned to London, when your Ladyship was sure to hear of it. Why they live but just by, madam; and my master, I know, has been several times in company where they have been visiting.

Lady Harriet. Ay, she was your master's intended.

Bloom. O yes, my Lady, I know that.

Lady Harriet. Insignificant girl—I triumphed, when I snatched him from her, and now I suppose, she thinks to triumph equally.

Bloom. No doubt, madam—But, if I was you, I wou'd let her see I cared nothing about him.

Lady Harriet. And do you imagine I do care? No, indeed, Bloom; my exchange is for the better,

ter, I am certain ; and [*sighing*] entirely to my satisfaction.

Bloom. Indeed I think so, madam : you certainly have changed for the better—and, bless me, I think, of all the husbands I ever saw, my present master is sure the fondest.

Lady Harriet. As for that—no one cou'd be fonder than Sir George at first.

Bloom. Ay, my Lady, but Major Cyprus is not so flighty as Sir George.

Lady Harriet. Not so flighty—[*sighs.*] I have been envy'd Sir George's gaiety a thousand times.

Bloom. Yes, my Lady, when your Ladyship married first, I suppose ; but you know, in a few months, Sir George altered so much, and seemed so miserable, I protest every single rap that came at the door made my blood run cold, for I took it for the report of a pistol.

Lady Harriet. You need not have feared him, Bloom—he is too fond of the pleasures of this life. Dear pleasures which he wanted to retrench me in.

Bloom. More shame for him, madam.—Now my present master is a soldier ; and, what is more, I dare say will soon be call'd on to go abroad.

Lady Harriet. Hah !

Bloom. Nay, I beg your Ladyship's pardon—I thought perhaps your Ladyship wished to see the Major show himself a courageous gentleman in the field ; and that was the reason of your preferring him to Sir George.

Lady Harriet. I prefer ! Did not my brother, from Sir George's humiliating suspicions and cruel treatment of me, compel us to a divorce ; and then, as a defence for my weakness, forced me into the arms of the Major ; being, I suppose, convinced that nothing less than a soldier should undertake the guard of a Lady's honour !

Bloom.

Bloom. Very true, madam——and I heard the Major say, this morning, as your Ladyship left the room, that “your Ladyship’s honour would require the guard of a file of musketeers.”

Lady Harriet. Ungenerous man——even worse to me than Sir George——for poor Sir George, from my indiscreet partiality to this ingrate, had some pretence for his unkind apprehensions; but Mr. Cyprus, who knows what proofs of affection I have given him, even in preference to the man I had sworn to love—

Bloom. Nay, I fancy, that is what frightens my master; for I believe he is a little fearful lest your Ladyship shou’d chance to be forsworn again.

Lady Harriet. Insolent supposition——He knows the delicacy of my sentiments—my honour to Sir George—knows that, although his unwearied artifices conquered my too susceptible heart, and hurried me to indiscretions, I merited not that severe contumely I have endured.

Bloom. Bless my soul!—Well, now I assure you, you surprize me!—And so, my Lady, there was nothing at all in it when Sir George found my master in the closet?

Lady Harriet. What did you suppose?

Bloom. Oh, my Lady, nothing——I hope I did not distress your Ladyship by the mention of Sir George’s second marriage.

Lady Harriet. Ridiculous!

Bloom. Nay, indeed, I always thought, as your Ladyship wou’d not live with him yourself, your Ladyship did not wish to prevent them that wou’d.

Lady Harriet. Don’t mention that insignificant woman!

Bloom. If I was your Ladyship, I am sure
I wou’d

I wou'd not care—especially as I got married before him.

Lady Harriet. Leave me.

Bloom. [*Aside*]. She'll have another husband within half a year—and so have three all alive at once—Well, I will say, 'tis very hard that, because I am poor, I never can have above one at a time.

[*Exit Bloom.*]

Lady Harriet. And so Sir George has been married these three months to another, and intirely forgot me—To be so soon forgotten!—I shall never now forget him, I am certain. He has behaved like a man of resolution and spirit in casting me from his heart, and I feel the irreparable loss. Why were we divorced? I shou'd have disliked him still had he been my husband; and yet how tender, how patient to my failings to what Mr. Cyprus is—His cruel and unjust suspicions of me are not to be borne.—How provokingly did he treat me last night—I was too tame—but the next time he insults me with his jealousy; I will endeavour to augment rather than pacify it—I'll try a reverse of conduct—Though, indeed, I *am* tolerably provoking in all our wrangles:—yes, thank heaven, I can say as cool spiteful things as any woman in the world.

[*Exit.*]

SCENE

S C E N E III.

Another Apartment in Major Cyprus's House.

Enter Colonel Downright, followed by the Major.

Colonel Downright. I assure you, Major, this is the first visit I have made since I set my foot in London.—Nay, and faith, no great compliment to you, neither; for, as I parted with my fellow passengers at Portsmouth, I don't know that I have a friend or acquaintance in the whole town but yourself.

Major Cyprus. I am happy in your want of friends, Colonel, if it gives you occasion to consider me as one.

Colonel Downright. As for that, I don't want friends neither, I believe; only they are not here, at present. I have plenty of friends on the other side the Atlantic.—Zounds, I think it wou'd be hard for a man, who has been so long in the army, and borne a post like mine in it, not to have a regiment of friends, at least.

Major Cyprus. Which is a great consolation to you, no doubt, Colonel.

Colonel Downright. The greatest in the world, Major. But what!—you have changed your house since I was last in England—this is not the same, I think, tho' near the same spot.

Major Cyprus. Yes—I have changed my house—and, what is more, changed my state too, Colonel.

Colonel Downright. Why, you are not married?

Major Cyprus. What surprises you?—

Colonel

Colonel Downright. Nay, I am not surpris'd at your marrying, only at your appearing so easy about it.

Major Cyprus. And why not, Colonel? A valuable woman——

Colonel Downright. Very true——very true——and so I wish you joy with all my heart. (*Shaking hands*) But, who is the Lady, pray? Do I know her, or any of her family?

Major Cyprus. Did you know Sir George Euston?—

Colonel Downright. I have heard of him.

Major Cyprus. She was his Lady.

Colonel Downright. A widow!

Major Cyprus. No—she was no widow.

Colonel Downright. Did not you say she was Sir George Euston's wife?

Major Cyprus. Very true—but Sir George is still living.

Colonel Downright. What, the devil, is the man living, and you married to his wife?

Major Cyprus. It was a divorce, Colonel.

Colonel Downright. A divorce!—Whu!—Now I understand you.—Why that's *marriage en militaire*.—You might well appear so easy.

Major Cyprus. Fy, Colonel—I assure you Lady Harriet Cyprus and I are a most happy couple—and my having snatched her from “a dull-doating husband” gives superior pleasure and triumph to our bliss.

Colonel Downright. The husband is much obliged to you both.

Major Cyprus. Why, poor fellow, that is the worst—In spite of the congratulations I receive from my friends, and my natural desire of fame, and propensity to conquest, I do feel, and cannot help it, a most deep sorrow and compassion for the thorns I have planted in his bosom.

Colonel Downright. But, I suppose, he used his Lady very ill, before he provoked her to the divorce, and certainly prefer'd some other?

Major Cyprus. Oh no, by no means!—He doated on her, even to the day of their separation, notwithstanding it was *he* who sued for the divorce.

Colonel Downright. He who sued for the divorce—Oh! that was it! I understood you, that you had planted *thorns*—but you said *borns* I suppose.

Major Cyprus. [*Smiles*] Ha! ha!

Colonel Downright. Oh! I wish you much joy.

Major Cyprus. Why ironically, Colonel? Depend upon it, I am the envy of all the men in town---Lady Harriet Cyprus is a perfect beauty.

Colonel Downright. I am glad she is perfect in some respect.

Major Cyprus. Oh! [*With some inquietude*] ridiculous, Colonel---Divorces happen now every day—and the favoured lover is the most admired and envy'd of mortals, while the poor husband becomes an object of general pity.

Colonel Downright. Ay, the husband?

Major Cyprus. Yes, the husband.

Colonel Downright. Ay, and *you* are the husband now.

Major Cyprus. Pshaw! the forsaken husband.

Colonel Downright. You pity him?

Major Downright. Certainly.

Colonel Downright. And if he is a tender-hearted man, I suppose he pities you.

Major Cyprus. Ha, ha, ha---Let me describe a scene to you, where poor Sir George's situation must affect the most obdurate heart. Lady Harriet Euston (now Lady Harriet Cyprus) was, when I first became acquainted with her, a very loving wife: (we are friends, Colonel, and I will venture to recount a few anecdotes to you)
a very

a very loving wife indeed ; and, but for my insinuations---artful insinuations I may call them---had continued her conjugal regard---she had been to this hour an example to wives, if I had not tempted her to stray.

Colonel Downright. Ay, you!---or somebody else.

Major Cyprus. [*Disturbed*] Hear me out, Colonel---she was long an example to wives---she was I assure you.---But to describe to you Sir George's pitiable situation, and what was chiefly the cause of the divorce ---One evening we had prolonged the *tête-à-tête* rather beyond the usual time ; when, unexpectedly, Sir George and a party of beaux and belles were rushing up stairs,---
“ Dear Major,” cried my wife---

Colonel Downright. Your wife?---Sir George's you mean.

Major Cyprus. Yes, Sir George's *then*---but my wife *now*.

Colonel Downright. Ay, ay, and I most sincerely give you joy ! [*Ironically*]

Major Cyprus. Pshaw, you put me out---
“ Dear Major,” cried my wife:---or Sir George's ! if you will have it so---“What will become of us,” (for Sir George had given us some little proofs of his jealousy) “what will become of us !” exclaimed the then Lady Harriet Euston---
“ Put me into your thimble, into the eye of your needle, madam,” said I---Instead of which, cramm'd I was into that closet.

Colonel Downright. That closet !

Major Cyprus. That very identical closet, which you see there---for Sir George never loved the house after, and so settled it on her Ladyship---Screwed up in that closet, I believe I remained ten minutes ; when old Lady Downfall, who was of the party, called for drops, the door was opened,---and out dropt your humble servant.

Colonel Downright. Zounds, it was enough to make you wish yourself—

Major Cyprus. Nay, it was Sir George's place to wish himself away. Every bequ in the room was round me in a moment; and, whispering, "Give you joy, Major"—"The happiest man in the world"—"An Alexander"—"A conqueror every where."—Even old Sir Samson Sinews shook his head, and wished to be in my place.

Colonel Downright. Zounds I would have thrust him into the closet, and kept him there for a month. But what did the husband say all this time?

Major Cyprus. That is what I was going to tell you—What did he say? Why, he said nothing. You may depend upon it, he heard and saw all the half-stifled laughs, and was wise enough to know to whom they were directed—so poor fellow he turned pale—bit his lips—looked at her Ladyship—looked at me—looked at his sword—and then cried, "Heigh ho!"

Colonel Downright. Heigh ho!—And what the deuce did you say?

Major. What do you think, I said? Egad, I was a little confused.

Colonel Downright. Confused!

Major Cyprus. And do you know I said—Faith it was an odd speech, and has been laughed at since in a thousand fashionable circles—the conclusion of it has been particularly marked.—"Dear Sir George," said I—He was standing where you may be (here, a little more this way) and I just where I am at present—"Dear Sir George," said I (half stifling a laugh, for by my soul I could not help it, though I pitied the poor devil too) "Dear Sir George," said I, "I'll tell you what"—"you will find *uobody* to blame in this affair—I protest my being in that closet was entirely owing to —" I'll

—"I'll tell you what"—In short to an—an *undescribable something*"—There I made a full stop.

Colonel Downright "An undescribable something."

Major Cyprus. 'Tis true upon my soul; those were the very words.

Colonel Downright. Owing to an "Undescribable something," and "I'll tell you what," that I got into this closet: and so I suppose the next day Sir George left both his wife and the closet, and you have ever since held possession.

Major Cyprus. After some other explanations, and regular proceedings, I became the happy husband he was never formed to be.

Colonel Downright. But I hope you keep the key of the closet.

Major Cyprus. You will have your joke, Colonel——Sir George, out of despair, is just married again—and Lady Harriet's affection for *me* is such—yet faith I must confess to you, too, Colonel, that notwithstanding I am so very happy in my marriage—and my wife so very beautiful and so affectionate—yet I am a sad wicked fellow; I have not forgot my old ways—no, I am going to-morrow evening to meet a Lady of untarnished reputation—a married lady—Faith 'tis wrong—I know it is—but I cannot withstand the temptation—no, I cannot forget my old ways.

[*Yawning.*

Colonel Downright. And do you suppose her Ladyship can forget *her* old ways either?

[*Yawning.*

Major Cyprus. For shame, Colonel—but you are so fond of a joke—egad I have a great mind to make you laugh most heartily at the business I have now on my hands—you wou'd say it was the most impudent thing of me—I'll tell you another time, on purpose to make you laugh; no other design

whatever. [*A bell rings*] That is her Ladyship's bell—come, I will introduce you to her directly; and, I flatter myself, you will admire my choice.

Colonel Downright. It does indeed excite my admiration most prodigiously. [*Exeunt.*

End of the First Act.

A C T II.

S C E N E I.

A Room at Sir George Euston's.

Enter Mr. Anthony Euston, and a Servant.

Servant.

I'LL let my master know immediately, Sir.

[*Exit.*

Mr. Anthony. Sir George has changed all his servants, I think, as well as his house, for I have not seen one that I know; and not one of them seems to remember their old friend Anthony Euston.

Enter Servant.

Servant. I beg your pardon, Sir, I thought my master had been at home; but he is not.

Mr. Anthony. Is not he?

Servant. No, Sir; he has been gone out this half hour.

Mr. Anthony. He is gone to my house, then, I dare say—Is your Lady at home?

Servant. Yes, Sir.

Mr. Anthony. Be so kind as to let her know I should be glad to see her.

Servant. What name, pray Sir?

Mr. Anthony. Only say a relation she will be glad to see. [*Exit Servant.*] Sir George may not be gone to my house, neither; for, perhaps, my

brother has not yet called on him, and he may be ignorant of our arrival.—This house is a handsome one—yet, I wonder Sir George shou'd leave his other—for I remember my niece was remarkably fond of its situation——Poor girl—if she knew it was Anthony, Anthony Euston, I believe she wou'd not be so long in coming. (*Goes to the side of the scene and calls*) Come, come, my dear! 'tis an old friend that wants to see you—(*He walks to the opposite side, and, when he hears Lady Euston entering, he returns and calls.*) Come, come—sure you have kept me long enough!

Enter Lady Euston.

(*As Mr. Anthony is going with great eagerness to salute her he stops short, and she curtesies.*)

Mr. Anthony. I beg your pardon, madam! I thought I had been speaking to my niece.

Lady Euston. Your niece, Sir?

Mr. Anthony. The Lady of the house, madam.

Lady Euston. I have the honour to be mistress of this house, Sir.

Mr. Anthony. Madam!

Lady Euston. My name is Euston, Sir.

Mr. Anthony. Good Heaven! Is then my niece, that beautiful young woman, dead?

Lady Euston. The Lady that was Lady Harriet Ogle, Sir?—

Mr. Anthony. Yes.—

Lady Euston. No, Sir, she is still living, and very well—I saw her the other morning.

Mr. Anthony. Madam, you rejoice me.

Lady Euston. You are only mistaken in the house, Sir; that's all.

Mr. Anthony. Madam, you make me happier than I can express. But how cou'd the mistake happen? They told me my nephew lived here—

Indeed,

Indeed, I named no names at the door, but only ask'd the man if his master was within; and your name being Euston, madam, I suppose, first caused the mistake.

Lady Euston. Very likely, Sir.

Mr. Anthony. I beg pardon for the trouble I have give you.

Lady Euston. No apologies, Sir—Permit me to order one of my servants to shew you to Lady Harriet's.

Mr. Anthony. No, I am much obliged to you.—If it is the same house that Sir George Euston lived in, about two years ago, I know it very well.

Lady Euston. It is, Sir.

Mr. Anthony. Madam, I thank you—and once more beg pardon for the trouble I have given you, through a mistake.

Lady Euston. Dear Sir, no apology—permit the servant to shew you to Lady Harriet's.

Mr. Anthony. No, madam, I thank you; I have been often there, and know the house very well.—Madam, good morning to you—I beg your pardon—good morning, madam.

[*Exit Mr. Anthony.*]

Lady Euston. Good morning to you, Sir—This is certainly an uncle of Lady Harriet's, who is unacquainted with her divorce—and I cou'd not inform him of it; 'twould have led to such disagreeable explanations, and such a long round-about story it must have caused—"Sir, I am *second wife* to your *present* niece's *first husband*."—Lud! Lud! how ashamed I shou'd have been—Lady Harriet had better explain it by far.

[*Exit Lady Euston.*]

S C E N E II.

A Room at Major Cyprus's,

Enter Colonel Downright and Sir Harry Harmless,

Sir Harry. Now the Major is gone, Colonel—notwithstanding all he has been talking, of love, and his vast happiness—you will hardly believe it, perhaps—but he is not so very happy.

Colonel Downright. No!

Sir Harry. No, poor man—you will hardly think it—but he is jealous.

Colonel Downright. What already? And, for Heaven sake, of whom?

Sir Harry. Nay, I assure you he has no cause—Nor is he jealous of one alone,—he is so of every body—and will be so of you—therefore, I tell you, that you may be on your guard.—I am constantly with his Lady and him, and, because the poor woman once shut him up in her closet, he now suspects a lover concealed in every part of the house—and I have known him, when the mad fit has been upon him, search for a supposed rival even in her drawers and band-boxes.

Colonel Downright. Pray Sir, do you live in the house?

Sir Harry. I have been on a visit here these six weeks.

Colonel Downright. And during that time——

Sir Harry. I have seen such things! Enough to terrify me from marrying—for wives are sometimes so provoking, I am sure I cou'd not keep my temper—Now, here is Lady Harriet Cyprus—you cannot think how provoking she is—she sometimes says such terrible things to her husband, that, I am sure, if she was my wife——

Colonel Downright. Why you wou'd not beat her, wou'd you? or lock her up?

Sir

Sir Harry. No—but perhaps I might kick her lapdog, or do some outrage to her dress.

Colonel Downright. You wou'd make an admirable soldier, Sir Harry.

Sir Harry. I must own, Colonel, I shou'd have no objection to a commission, where the regimentals were becoming.

Colonel Downright. Really!—

Sir Harry. And indeed, Colonel, I am positive you wou'd be obliged to *press* commissioned officers, if it were not for the becomingness of some of their dresses.

Colonel Downright. Give me your hand, Sir Harry.—I like you much—and could I see you master of a firelock, or a wife—

Sir Harry. No.—While my neighbours marry, I never shall.

Colonel Downright. Why so, Sir Harry?

Sir Harry. Their wives will do for me.

Colonel Downright. I am amazed, Sir Harry, that the Major, jealous as you describe him, should suffer you to remain in his house!

Sir Harry. I have often been surprised at it myself.

Colonel Downright. You have!

Sir Harry. But he never was jealous of *me*. Zounds it piques me sometimes.—The ladies are fond of me, and yet the gentlemen are not jealous of me—But, indeed, my amours have all been managed so secretly, that none of them have ever yet come to light.

Colonel Downright. But who has been to blame there, Sir Harry?

Sir Harry. I have paid regard to the reputation of the ladies, and none to my own. I expect an assignation to-morrow evening, and I question whether I shall mention it to above three or four of my acquaintance, notwithstanding the lady is
reputed

reputed a woman of honour, and is besides a married lady.

Colonel Downright. And would you divulge the appointment sooner on that account?

Sir Harry. Certainly! Had I a wish to build a reputation.

Colonel Downright. Who have we here? [*Looking out.*]

Sir Harry. The Major and her Ladyship! He has been following her into the Park, and is now conducting her home. I assure you their company at present will not be very desirable; so step this way, dear Colonel, and I will indulge you with a few more particulars.—Egad, I can surprise you. [*Exeunt Col. Downright and Sir Harry.*]

Enter Lady Harriet Cyprus, followed by Major Cyprus.

Major Cyprus. So, madam, I have followed you home, and now shou'd be glad to know what unusual whim brought you into the Park so early?

Lady Harriet. How can you be so teasing as to ask questions? Especially when you see I am too fatigued to answer.

Major Cyprus. Fatigued! madam.—How is it possible—

Lady Harriet. Don't speak so loud.—I'm thinking of something else.

Major Cyprus. Zounds, Madam, I say—

Lady Harriet. How can you, Major?—Sir George Euston, with all his faults, never asked me such impertinent questions!

Major Cyprus. Sir George! madam—How dare you mention his name to me, madam?—How dare you mention to me that contemptible——?

Lady Harriet. Dear Major, do not be severe—consider you are—a married man yourself now.

Major Cyprus. Heavens! Madam, do not imagine——

Lady Harriet. And you know every gentleman is liable to——

Major Cyprus. What, madam?

Lady Harriet. Be married.—There is nothing certain in this world.

Major Cyprus. Very well, madam!——Very well—I believe I understand your insinuation; and I deserve it.—I justly deserve it for venturing my happiness with a woman whose principles I *knew*.

Lady Harriet. How dare you, Major Cyprus, upbraid me, or think, because my unhappy partiality for you *once* betrayed me into indiscretions, I am not now an altered woman?—I am sure I have most heartily repented of all my faults, and wished a thousand times I had never seen you.

Major Cyprus. Exceedingly well, indeed, madam!—Exceedingly well.—Repent you ever saw me! What am I to expect after such a declaration?—And why repent you ever saw me?—What, you won't speak!—I believe you are the only woman who cou'd call me her husband, and be insensible of her happiness.---When you consider, too, your release from Sir George—What makes you smile, madam?—Surely, after all your seeming contempt for Sir George, you wou'd not, even in *idea*, put him in competition with *me*?—Though, by heaven, your continual mention of him is enough to create a jealousy---did I not know how much you despise him.---I am amazed how you cou'd ever consent to marry such a being, and so I have told you a hundred times.---Not one accomplishment.

Lady Harriet. Now you provoke me---he had a thousand!---

Major Cyprus. That I am destitute of?

Lady Harriet. (*Sighs.*) Oh!

Major

Major Cyprus. Zounds, madam, what do you mean by that sigh?—And in what quality, pray, did your *first* husband, your first husband, madam—in what quality did he eclipse your humble servant?

Lady Harriet. [*After a pause.*] He danced better than any man I ever saw.

Major Cyprus. Danced better!

Lady Harriet. And his bow was exquisite.—

Major Cyprus. [*Bowing.*] O—your most obedient!

Lady Harriet. Then, sometimes, he was the most entertaining—

Major Cyprus. You would have a husband entertain his wife then?

Lady Harriet. Certainly—and entertain himself at the same time.

Major Cyprus. I wish to heaven you had kept him, with all his accomplishments!

Lady Harriet. [*Sighs and shakes her head.*] Oh!

Major Cyprus. Damnation!—[*After a pause, comes up to her with a softened tone of voice.*] Come hither.—Come, tell me,—wou'd you?—and so you wou'd really prefer your old husband to me?—

Lady Harriet. Old!—He was the youngest.

Major Cyprus. Madam, madam, I'll hear no more—I'll suffer no more.—Since you can compare that contemptible animal to me, I have done with you—you are below even my resentment.

Lady Harriet. Dear Major, say what you will, Sir George had his virtues—He seldom asked me where I was going; or who visited me in his absence?—Where I had been walking?—What made me so remarkably cheerful, or why I looked so very ill-natured? in short, he was truly and literally, in every respect, a fashionable husband.

Major Cyprus. You are—

Enter

Enter Servant.

Servant. Sir, a gentleman below desires to see you ; I did not know whether you chose to be at home or not, so I told him I believed you were gone out, but that I would come and see.

Major Cyprus. I am gone out—go and tell him so. [*Exit Servant.*] I am in too ill a humour to see any body—my temper is spoiled.—I am neither fit for company, pleasure, business, nor any thing.

Lady Harriet. Nor I—I am spoil'd too.

Enter Servant.

Servant. The gentleman, madam, begs to see you.—Do you chuse I should shew him up ?

Lady Harriet. Yes, shew him up—he may be of service to my spirits.—Who is he?—What is his name ?

Servant. I ask'd him, madam, but he would not say.—He first ask'd me if my master was within ; and when I return'd, and told him no, he said, tell your Lady, Lady Harriet, I desire to see *her*.—He spoke as if he was acquainted with your Ladyship.

Lady Harriet. Shew him up.—

Major Cyprus. You will please to take him into another room.

Lady Harriet. It is not my intention to leave this room till dinner.

Major Cyprus. Nor mine.

Lady Harriet. Then you'll have an opportunity of assuring the gentleman, *yourself*, you are not at home.

Servant. Shou'd I shew the gentleman into another room, madam ?

Major Cyprus. No.

[*Exit angrily.*

Lady Harriet. Shew the gentleman up.—

[*Exit*

[*Exit Servant.*] Who in the name of wonder can it be, that wants both the Major and me? I thought our acquaintance had been all separate visitors.

Enter the Servant, with Mr. Anthony Euston following.

Lady Harriet. Mr. Anthony Euston!—(*Mr. Anthony salutes her.*)—Is it possible I shou'd have the honor of a visit from you?

Mr. Anthony. My dear Lady, and why not? What you heard, I suppose, I was lost; But have not heard again that I was found?

Lady Harriet. No, upon my word, Sir, and the sight of you amazes me.

Mr. Anthony. Was not my brother here this morning?

Lady Harriet. No, Sir.

Mr. Anthony. Nor did not your husband expect me?

Lady Harriet. No, indeed, Sir!

Mr. Anthony. My brother not here to tell your husband of our safety, after all the perils of shipwreck, imprisonment, and a story fit for a romance! I am astonished!

Lady Harriet. Is Mr. Euston too return'd safe?

Mr. Anthony. Certainly.—'Tis strange he has not been here before me! Where is your husband?

Lady Harriet. Did you ask for him when you came in?

Mr. Anthony. Yes, I asked the Servant if his master was at home, but he returned and said, no;—so I then asked him for his mistress—and here I find you, my dear Lady, as beautiful as ever!—But *where* is my nephew? I am all impatience till I see him.

Lady

Lady Harriet. [*Aside*] He does not know what has happened, I find.

Mr. Anthony. What is the matter, my dear?

Lady Harriet. You are just arrived from abroad, Sir?

Mr. Anthony. Only left the ship yesterday morning, came to London late in the evening, and, not having had a night's rest on shore for many months, went to bed as soon as I arrived; and, as soon as I rose this morning, came with my respects to you.

Lady Harriet. Then you have seen no acquaintance since you came to town?

Mr. Anthony. You are the first.—Can you suppose I shou'd visit any one before I had seen you; or do you think any of my friends wou'd find me out the very night of my arrival?

Lady Harriet. And have you met with none of your English acquaintance while you have been abroad—nor read any of our English newspapers?

Mr. Anthony. I have seen neither since I left England.—Indeed, when I am at a distance from my friends, as I hate to be imposed on, I seldom ask a question concerning them, and never read a paragraph where their names are mention'd.

Enter Colonel Downright.

Colonel Downright. I beg your Ladyship's pardon—I thought the Major had been here;—he promised he wou'd go with me into the city on some business—He is not gone out, I hope?

Lady Harriet. Mr. Euston, you will excuse me a moment—I will send [*To the Colonel.*] the Major to you immediately, Sir. [*Aside.*] Let him explain to Mr. Euston—the task wou'd be too much for me.

[*Exit Lady Harriet.*

C

Mr.

Mr. Anthony. My fellow traveller ! Have you forgot me ?

[*Going up to the Colonel.*]

Colonel Downright. My good friend ! Is it you ?—I am heartily glad to see you—I thought it *was* you ! and then again—Where is my friend your brother ? Why, you got to town before me—I am glad to meet you, faith !—So unexpectedly too !

Enter Major Cyprus, and bows to Mr. Anthony.

Major Cyprus. Colonel, I beg your pardon, I am afraid I have tired your patience ?

Colonel Downright. Not at all——Sir Harry Harmless has been an excellent companion, but he has just left me. [*To Mr. Anthony.* I shou'd have call'd on you in the afternoon—Who wou'd have thought of meeting you here ?

Mr. Anthony. Why faith, Colonel, I do not know a more likely place to find a man at, than a relation's house.

Colonel Downright. What, are the Major and you related ?

Mr. Anthony. Sir !

Major Cyprus. Have I the honour of being related to you, Sir ?

[*Bowing.*]

Mr. Anthony. Not that I know of, Sir.—

[*Bowing.*]

Major Cyprus. If Lady Harriet has that honor, Sir, I presume to claim the same.

Mr. Anthony. You are related to Lady Harriet then, Sir ?

Major Cyprus. By very close ties.

Mr. Anthony. Sir, I shall be happy to be better acquainted.

Colonel Downright. [*Aside to the Major.*] Tell him the story of the closet—Egad 'twill make him laugh.

Major

Major Cyprus. [*Aside to the Colonel.*] Fy, fy !
—He is a relation of my wife's.

Colonel Downright. [*Aside.*] He would not like a good story the worse for that—Wou'd you, Mr. Anthony, have any dislike to a good story?

Mr. Anthony. A story, Sir?—

Colonel Downright. Ay, a good story of a—a—zounds “I'll tell you what :” and “an “ undescrivable something.”—

Major Cyprus. For shame, for shame, Colonel !

Mr. Anthony. Why, my fellow traveller, you are at your jokes, the same as ever, I find.—What is all this ?

Major Cyprus. Nothing, Sir ; nothing, I assure you.

Colonel Downright. As good a story as ever was told. Tell it, Major ; I wou'd, but I cannot look it as you do.—Egad you look it to the life.

Mr. Anthony. Well, gentlemen, I should be very happy to hear this story, but I am obliged to defer it till some other time,—I have waited for Sir George as long as possible, and, as I find he does not come, I'm resolved to go in search of him—So, gentlemen, your humble servant—If I meet with Sir George, I shall return, I dare say, immediately ; and, if not, I shall certainly call in the afternoon—My compliments to her Ladyship—Your servant, gentlemen.

Major Cyprus. Pray, Sir, who did you expect to meet here ?

Mr. Anthony. Only Sir George, Sir.

Major Cyprus. What Sir George, pray, Sir ?

Mr. Anthony. Sir George Euston, Sir.

Major Cyprus. Sir George Euston, Sir !—Did you expect to meet Sir George Euston *here* ?

Mr. Anthony. Certainly I did, Sir.

Colonel Downright. That's all for want of hear-

ing the story.—Do, my good friend, come back and hear the story of the “undescribable something,”—and of the closet—that little closet—and, “I’ll tell you what!”

Major Cyprus. Colonel, permit me to speak seriously to the gentleman.—Sir, [*To Mr. Anthony.*] you will never see Sir George Euston in this house, I am certain.

Mr. Anthony. How so, pray, Sir?

Major Cyprus. I am now master of this house, and——

Mr. Anthony. You are master of this house!

Major Cyprus. Yes, Sir.

Colonel Downright. He took possession of the closet, some time ago.

Mr. Anthony. But pray, Sir, does not Lady Harriet Euston, then, live here?

Major Cyprus. That Lady is no longer Lady Harriet Euston, Sir, but Cyprus—she is my wife.

Colonel Downright. You have spoiled the whole story, by beginning at the wrong end.

Mr. Anthony. You astonish me!—I beg your pardon—I came but last night from the West-Indies, where I have been for some time, and where not the smallest intelligence from England has ever reached me; therefore you will excuse my ignorance.—But I think her Ladyship, knowing how great a stranger I was, ought to have dealt a little more openly with me.—

Major Cyprus. I dare say, Sir, her Ladyship—

Mr. Anthony. Yes, I suppose her Ladyship was unwilling to be the first to acquaint me with the death of Sir George.

Major Cyprus. The death of Sir George, Sir!

Mr. Anthony. Yes, Sir—for, while I give you joy on your marriage, give me leave to say, that mine is all damped by the loss of him—and my grief is doubly poignant; because, till this mo-

ment, I was not only unacquainted with Lady Harriet's second marriage, but, till this moment, I did not even know Sir George was dead !

Major Cyprus. Sir George is not dead, Sir.

Mr. Anthony. What do you mean?—Did you not tell me you were married to his wife?

Major Cyprus. Very true, Sir—but you know that is no reason, now-a-days, why the Lady's first husband shou'd be dead.

Colonel Downright. Why, my brother mess-mate, you are just like me—I had forgot that a man in England might marry his neighbour's wife, and his neighbour living in the next street.—And 'tis not the wives of their neighbours, only, these generous gentlemen assail, but more especially the wives of their *friends*.

Mr. Anthony. Shame on such friendship ! Shame on such neighbourhood !—Let every tender husband and virtuous wife desert it !—[*To the Major.*] Sir, I wish you joy ; and, though I know not who are the parties to be censured in this business, I wish her Ladyship joy—But more, in particular, I wish *myself* joy, with the sincerest congratulation, that, amidst the depravity of the times, I have followed a beloved wife to her peaceful grave, (mournful as the day was) without seeing her wrested from my arms by the insinuations of a villain ; or being myself that villain to force her to seek a refuge from my perjuries, in the protection of another !

Major Cyprus. Dear Sir, let me assure you that, however Lady Harriet's conduct may meet censure from the unfeeling prude, the woman of sensibility and taste must applaud her spirit, which could no longer submit to the tyranny of Sir George.

Mr. Anthony. Did her Ladyship then sue for the divorce ?

Major Cyprus. No—Sir George, on some frivolous suspicion, was pleased to sue for it.

Mr. Anthony. Is Sir George married again?

Major Cyprus. Yes, Sir, he is married—He has won the lady—and he has won her fortune—but for her affection—there, I believe, we must excuse Sir George——that is a stake now playing for by many noblemen of fashion.

Mr. Anthony. I suspect Sir George is the dupe of a fashionable gallantry.—I know his virtues—and am sorry to find a man of merit so betrayed.

Major Cyprus. Dear Sir, think on Lady Harriet, your relation.

Mr. Anthony. Thank heaven, all ties between Lady Harriet and me were dissolved when she was divorced from Sir George—and so they should, Sir, had she been my own daughter, and Sir George, with the principles I know he possesses, an utter stranger to me.

Colonel Downright. Why then, I believe, my friend, you are *not* at a relation's house.

Mr. Anthony. Colonel, you will call on me shortly.—Sir, (Mr. Cyprus I think you call yourself) I assure you, Sir, as a particular friend of my nephew's, and of the family in general—I am, Sir, your most obedient servant——your humble servant, Sir. [*With contempt.*]

[*Exit Anthony.*]

Major Cyprus. For heaven's sake, who is this man? I took him to be Lady Harriet's uncle! Explain to me who the brute is.

Colonel Downright. He came passenger from the West-Indies in the same ship with me, and that was the first of our acquaintance.—As he was no more reserved than I, we soon became intimate; and I learnt from him that his fortune (a pretty good one) was designed for a nephew, whom I now recollect (tho' the deuce take me if I thought

I thought of it before) to be this very Sir George Euston—and a son, an only child, by that wife he speaks so tenderly of, he disinherits.

Major Cyprus. This is the very savage I heard Lady Harriet say the other day was drown'd.—What, has his son been guilty of the criminality of a divorce?

Colonel Downright. No—his guilt is in being married—married to some poor girl—without friends or fortune.—Thank heaven I have neither child nor wife to offend me; but, if I had, I don't know which I wou'd make the most obedient.

Major Cyprus. And were you never a lover, Colonel? Never in the service of the ladies?

Colonel Downright. O yes—I have been in a closet before now—and under a bed too—but then I was never pull'd out by a *husband*; and, on a discovery, I cou'd always describe the something that brought me there.

Major Cyprus. By heaven you are so taken with that joke, I cannot reserve that which I before hinted at from you any longer—Rat me if I have not an appointment for to-morrow evening with Euston's *other* wife!—Is it not the most impudent thing of me?—

Colonel Downright. I'll be shot if I don't think so!—

Major Cyprus. The poor fellow thinks her as chaste as Diana; and so she is at present, as far as I know.—I was happy in her favor a few years ago—but, marriage not being then convenient, my passion was postponed—On her becoming Euston's wife, I renewed my addresses, and she has kindly allotted to-morrow evening for our first tête-à-tête.

Colonel Downright. Zounds, have a care, or you will be obliged to marry *her* too.

Major Cyprus. No, no—we shall be very circumspect in our conduct.—But laugh!—Why the devil don't you laugh?

Colonel Downright. No, I was thinking—

Major Cyprus. On what—?

Colonel Downright. Come, I must be gone, or I shall be too late for my business.

Major Cyprus. I'll attend you immediately—But what were you thinking on?

Colonel Downright. I was thinking on the happiness—of a married man.

[*Exeunt Colonel Downright and Major Cyprus.*]

End of the Second Act.

A C T

A C T III.

SCENE I.

An Apartment at Sir George Euston's.

Enter Mr. Euston and Sir George.

Mr. Euston.

BLESS my soul!—Bless my soul! Why, what did my brother Anthony say?—Was not he in a dreadful passion?—Only think of *his* being made such a fool of!—It would not have signified had it been *me*. It had been a good joke if the mistake had happened to me; then you wou'd have had something to have laughed at.

Sir George. Dear Sir, let us think no more about it—my Uncle has listened to reason, and approves my conduct in every circumstance.

Mr. Euston. Ay, 'tis very well, George—'tis all very well—but I know, had you been his son, he wou'd not have forgiven you—he loved that boy so well he wou'd never forgive him the smallest fault.

Sir George. A very cruel proof his affection.

Mr. Euston. 'Tis true, notwithstanding---you know it is---Poor Charles!---George, you must do something for him---You know your Uncle won't---and I am tied from it by a solemn promise. Many a letter and petition came from his wife to my brother and me, before we went abroad, but all in vain; for I had but just then
given

given Anthony my word, and wou'd not equivocate, by causing the poor boy or his family to be relieved, in any shape, through my means; and therefore I forbore to mention their distress to you. However, now, though I have not forgot my promise, I will not be so *particular* about it—and, when the deviation from my word disturbs my conscience, I'll hush it to rest with having relieved a destitute a family.

Sir George. Say no more, Sir—I understand you—and to find out my cousin and his family shall immediately be my care.

Mr. Euston. [*Shaking hands with Sir George.*] That's right, George—Poor Charles is a Lieutenant in the East Indies.—His wife must be the first object of your bounty—Just before I left England she wrote me a letter from a village near York—where he left her, with two children, and she styles them, in her letter, “the offspring of “want and wretchedness.” I was a hard-hearted fellow not to listen to her complaint—but, I think, since I have been at sea, I have been more compassionate—I never knew, before, what it was to be cold or hungry.

Sir George. Can you tell me the name of the village, Sir, where I am to seek her?

Mr. Euston. Write to her at the post-office, Selby—If she should have left the place, they may still know where to send her letters. I wish some friend, that had not made a promise, would speak to my brother Anthony about them at present; perhaps, going to sea has changed his heart too.

Sir George. No, Sir, I touched on that subject when I was with him this morning.

Mr. Euston. Did you?—Did you?—And what did he say?—

Sir George. Asked if I meant to make him forbid me his sight—and, on my apologising, commanded

manded me never to mention my poor cousin in his hearing again.

Mr. Euston. Ay, that is what I must never do—Well, so much the better—for now, George, neither you nor I can tell tales one of another.

Sir George. You are right, Sir—Had my Uncle Anthony an estate to bestow on each of his family, he could not exact more obedience to his will than he does at present.

Mr. Euston. 'Tis very true, George. But what keeps him so long away?—I expected he wou'd have been with your Lady before this time, acknowledging her for his niece: tho' they have had one meeting it seems.

Sir George. My Uncle cannot be introduced to Lady Euston till to-morrow, Sir. Lord Layton, for whom he settled some business when he was abroad, called on him just as I came away, and, as his Lordship is going to Italy in a day or two, he entreated my Uncle to accompany him immediately to his country house (about ten miles from town) in order to look over some papers he has there.

Mr. Euston. Here comes your Lady, so I'll leave you.

Enter Lady Euston.

Lady Euston. Dear Mr. Euston, I hope I do not frighten you away—Sir George will be offended with me if I do.

Mr. Euston. No, Madam—I am sure no man cou'd be offended at being left in such charming company. *[Exit Mr. Euston.]*

Sir George. My Uncle is grown a man of gallantry!

Lady Euston. Yes, I inspire all the men.

Sir George. I believe you do.

Lady

Lady Euston. Cou'd I only inspire you with reason to listen to my arguments—

Sir George. 'Tis in vain.—The Major shall now feel my resentment—Did he imagine, because I was indifferent to the conduct of an *undeserving* woman, that I am not to be roused at such an injury as this?—An attempt on the principles of a woman of virtue!—'Tis done on purpose to try me, and, by Heaven, he shall find——That wretch too Sir Harry!—

Lady Euston. Oh, pray have pity on poor Sir Harry.

Sir George. No, madam.—I only defer my resentment till I have some conversation with my Uncle Anthony.

Lady Euston. Do, my dear Sir George, suffer me to revenge my own cause this once—and ever after—

Sir George. I positively must!

Lady Euston. Nay, Sir George, in a year or two, I may, perhaps, have no objection to your fighting a duel—but only three months married—I do wish to keep you a little longer.

Sir George. Depend upon it, Lady Euston, death had never half the terrors I have beheld it with since I called you mine—but that life you have endeared to me——

Lady Euston. You wou'd throw away immediately in my service—No, no, Sir George, a fond wife will never suffer her husband to revenge her wrongs at so great a risk. Besides, the exertion of a little *thought* and *fancy* will more powerfully vindicate innocence, than that brilliant piece of steel, I assure you.

Sir George. Perhaps you are right.

Lady Euston. Certainly I am—Now, suppose a gentleman makes love to me—I divulge the affront to you, you call my insulter to an account
—*Your*

—*Your* ball misses; *he* fires into the air; and, to the fame of having dared to wound your honour, he gains that of presenting you with your life.—

Sir George. But, why must these circumstances take place?

Lady Euston. Well, then, we will suppose he kills you; how do you like that?

Sir George. [*Smiling.*] Hem!

Lady Euston. Or, we will suppose, you kill him—Even how do you like *that*?

Sir George. Well, I confess that, if a severe punishment could be thought of for such insolence—

Lady Euston. There is as severe a punishment to men of gallantry (as they call themselves) as sword or pistol; laugh at them—that is a ball which cannot miss; and yet kills only their vanity.

Sir George. You are right.

Lady Euston. Let me see—we have been now only three months married; and, in that short time, I have had no less than five or six men of fashion to turn into ridicule.—The first who ventured to declare his passion was Lord William Bloomly—his rank, joined to his uncommon beauty, had insured him success; and, wherever I went, I was certain to hear his distress whispered in my ear—at every opportunity he fell even upon his knees; and, as a tender earnest of my pity for him, begged, with all the eloquence of love, for “a single lock of my hair, which he would value more than any other woman’s person, the wealth of worlds, or (he is a great patriot, you know) even the welfare of his country.”

Sir George. I am out of patience!

Lady Euston. You will be more so—For I promised him this single lock.

Sir George. You did not!

Lady

Lady Euston. But I did—and added, with a blush, that I must insist on a few hairs from one of his eye-brows in return—which he absolutely refused;—and, on my urging it, was obliged to confess, “he valued that little brown arch more
“ than the lock he had been begging for; con-
“ frequently, more than any woman’s person,
“ the wealth of worlds, or even the welfare of
“ his country.”—I immediately circulated this anecdote, and exhibited my Lord both as a gallant and a patriot; and now his Lordship’s eye-brow, which was once the admiration, is become the ridicule of every drawing-room.

Sir George. Your Ladyship then wou’d not menace your lover?—

Lady Euston. Certainly not—“You are the
“ most beautiful woman I ever saw,” cried Lord *Bandy*; “and your Lordship is positively the most
“ lovely of mankind”—“What eyes,” cried he;
“ what hair,” cried I; “ what lips,” continued he;
“ what teeth,” added I; “ what a hand and
“ arm,” said he; “ and what a *leg* and *foot*,”
said I—“Your Ladyship is jesting,” was his Lordship’s last reply; and he has never since even paid me one compliment. Prudes censure my conduct—I am too free—while their favourite, Lady *Strenuous*, in another corner of the ball-room, cries to *her* admirer—“Desist, my Lord,
“ or my dear Sir Charles shall know that you
“ dare thus to wound my ears with your licen-
“ tious passion—if you ever presume to breath it
“ again, I will acquaint him with it—depend
“ upon it I will. [*Sighs and languishes.*] Oh! you
“ have destroyed my peace of mind for ever.”

Sir George. There are too many such ladies, but no such wou’d I hazard my life for—that I have proved.

Lady

Lady Euston. And, upon my word, Sir George, even the virtuous wife, who wou'd not have some regard to her husband's *life*, as well as his *honour*, if I were a gentleman, I should not feel myself under many obligations to.

Sir George. You wou'd protect both?—

Lady Euston. And the guilty not escape—Now (with your consent) what must be the confusion, shame, and disappointment, of my two masked lovers to-morrow evening—the brutal audacity of one, and insignificance of the other; both beneath *your* resentment, yet deserving objects of mine. And, indeed, Sir George, it is my fixed opinion, that he who wou'd endeavour to wrong a virtuous wife shou'd be held too despicable for the resentment of the husband, and only worthy the debasement inflicted by our sex. I have already sent a letter to Sir Harry with the appointment at the masquerade, and the Major has my promise of a meeting at the same time—Come, come, Sir George, it is the first petition I ever presented; do not refuse me!—

Sir George. Give me till the morning to consider of it?

Lady Euston. With all my heart—and in the mean time reflect on this—that, in regard to your terrible sex, whether as licentious lovers or valiant champions—women, of *real honour*, are not in danger from the one; and, therefore, like me, ought to forego the assistance of the other.

[*Exeunt Lady Euston and Sir George.*]

S C E N E II.

A Room at Colonel Downright's.

Enter Colonel Downright and Mr. Anthony Euston.

Colonel Downright. My good friend, I was just going to bed—but I am glad of your company, though I did not expect it.

Mr. Anthony. Colonel, my errand at this time was merely to ask a favour of you.

Colonel Downright. Command it, and you will make me proud.

Mr. Anthony. Why then, Colonel, with Lord Layton to-day (at whose house I dined) a circumstance happened on which account I expect his Lordship will call on me to-morrow for a fashionable satisfaction; and though, depend upon it, I wish for no such rash means of ending a dispute, yet, if his Lordship *shou'd* call upon me, 'tis fit I be prepared with a second; and I thank you for the friendly assurance you have now given me of your service.

Colonel Downright. You are as welcome to it — I was going to say, as my king—but, zounds, if I shou'd be killed in a pitiful quarrel at home, I shou'd blush even in my grave—for, when I die, I hope to have my knell rung by the groans of a score or two of our country's treacherous foes.

Mr. Anthony. The service I shall put you to, Colonel, will not prevent that hope.

Colonel Downright. But what, for Heaven's sake, has brought you into a quarrel?

Mr.

Mr. Anthony. The cause of our quarrel was—you will call it a very trivial one, I dare say—a woman!

Colonel Downright. Why, my old friend, you have not been quarrelling about a woman—Oh, if I shou'd be kill'd for a woman, I shou'd cut a noble figure indeed!—

Mr. Anthony. Hear me, Colonel, hear me—and, as you may question my prudence, let me tell you the whole adventure.—

Colonel Downright. Nay, nay, I did not mean to question your prudence, nor to speak against the women either. I like them as well as you do.—

Mr. Anthony. I own I have a respect for their sex, which unites me to them as their father, their friend, and admirer.—Therefore I beg you will give me your sentiments upon the character of one, whose behaviour, this day, has surpris'd me beyond measure—I will describe it to you, and you will tell me whether you believe me impos'd upon, or whether you think she really claims that extraordinary attention I have, some how, been compelled to give her.—

Colonel Downright. Well, let me hear.

Mr. Anthony. Lord Layton and I had no sooner plac'd ourselves in his Lordship's coach than he exclaim'd, he had just seen the most beautiful girl his eyes ever beheld, to whom he had given a look of solicitation, and that she was returning her answer by making up to to the coach—He begged a thousand pardons, but, with my permission, (as he expected no other company at his country house) he wou'd take her down to dine with us.—I, knowing his Lordship well, (and the girl being now arrived at the coach door) reluctantly assented, and she was immediately handed in.

Colonel Downright. Zounds, he shou'd have taken a companion for you too !

Mr. Anthony. Don't interrupt me.—When she had been seated about a minute, I cast my eyes upon her.—

Colonel Downright. 'Sdeath, I shou'd not have staid half so long.

Mr. Anthony. I was struck with her beauty—

Colonel Downright. And wished his Lordship out of the way, I suppose?—

Mr. Anthony. No—no.—There was a sensibility in her countenance that amazed me—blushes on her cheeks—tears in her eyes—When his Lordship spoke to her, she answer'd him with a forced smile, and a tremor on her voice.—She avoided all conversation ; and, when we alighted, I handed her out of the coach.

Colonel Downright. Ay, ay, I thought how it was.

Mr. Anthony. You misunderstand me.—I perceived her hand tremble—

Colonel Downright. And so, I suppose, did yours.

Mr. Anthony. If you interrupt me, Sir, you shall hear no more.

Colonel Downright. And, I believe, it will be for your credit if I don't.—

Mr. Anthony. Let me tell you all that passed.

Colonel Downright. With all my heart—if you don't blush at it, I shan't.

Mr. Anthony. I believe her to be a woman of virtue.

Colonel Downright. Then what the devil were my Lord and you—

Mr. Anthony. I have rescued her from him.

Colonel Downright. Why then the deuce take me if you are not more in love than I thought you were.

Mr.

Mr. Anthony. Oh, had you seen her countenance, so expressive of anguish!—The hope with which she lifted up her eyes to me, for deliverance!—The horror painted in her face, when I left the room!—Heard her piercing cries, that called me back to her protection! The despair and earnest supplication that hung upon her tongue, whilst she entreated him to view her, not as an object of *love*, but *charity*!—The grief! the pathetic tenderness with which she declared herself, “ a virtuous though forsaken wife!—A poor, indigent, forlorn mother; perishing, with her children,—for whose sake she had been tempted by the first lure that offered (prompted by more than common grief) to add the sense of guilt to all her other miseries !”

Colonel Downright. 'Sdeath—

Mr. Anthony. Cou'd I? Ought I to have gone and left her?—

Colonel Downright. Left her! No. But what did you do?

Mr. Anthony. Returned to the chamber, and insisted on his Lordship's resigning her to me.—

Colonel Downright. And did he?—

Mr. Anthony. She hung upon me; and, in spite of his menaces, I led her to my coach, (which was then come for me) and brought her safe away.—

Colonel Downright. I hope she got safe home too?

Mr. Anthony. Perfectly so——As her tears interrupted her, whenever she attempted to tell me where she lived, or explain any circumstance of her life to me, I asked no questions, but took her to my own house—desired my housekeeper to show an apartment, and treat her with attention—and, promising to see and speak with in the morning, left her to the repose which she must greatly want.—

Colonel Downright. And now you think his Lordship will send *you* to repose, for all this.

Mr. Anthony. He may attempt it, for which I wish to be prepared.

Colonel Downright. Well then, here is my hand—and, though I must acknowledge that you have had too little of the man of the world about you in this business, yet, as I said before, command me.—

Mr. Anthony. Come then, Colonel, my coach is waiting for me at the door; will you go with me to the next coffee-house?—I have to meet a gentleman there on a little business; and afterwards we will enjoy half an hour's conversation together.—

Colonel Downright. With all my heart.

[*Exeunt Mr. Anthony and Colonel.*]

End of the Third Act.

A C T IV.

S C E N E I.

A Room at Mr. Anthony Euston's.

Enter Mr. Euston.

Mr. Euston.

WONDERS will never cease! Who wou'd have thought it! Why surely it cannot be!—My brother Anthony to bring home a girl?—What wou'd he have said to *me* if I had done such a thing?—For my part, I never durst *think* of such a thing.—Perhaps it is some neighbour's child!—But if she is—the servant tells me she is very handsome, and Anthony wou'd not bring her home without some meaning.—What wou'd my nephew, George, say to this?—Why he would not believe it!—He would a great deal sooner believe it of me.——And yet I—I!—Lord bless me—how people may be mistaken!——Here he comes.

Enter Mr. Anthony.

Mr. Anthony. Brother, good morning to you.—Have you seen George this morning?

Mr. Euston. No, brother.

Mr. Anthony. Are you going there?

Mr. Euston. I believe I shall be presently, brother.

Mr. Anthony. [*Sitting down.*] Perhaps he may call here first.

Mr. Euston. [*Sitting down.*] Perhaps he may, brother. [*Mr. Anthony appears thoughtful, and leans on the table.*]

Mr. Euston. [*After a long pause, and with significant looks.*] It was a fine moon-shining night, last night.

Mr. Anthony. Yes, a fine night.

Mr. Euston. [*After another pause.*] And 'tis a very fine day, to-day.

Mr. Anthony. Yes—it is.

Mr. Euston. We have very fine weather, indeed.

Mr. Anthony. We have.——You have breakfasted, I suppose.

Mr. Euston. Yes—and so, I suppose, have you?

Mr. Anthony. Yes, some time——[*He begins writing.*]

Mr. Euston. I interrupt you, brother—but I am going.—[*Rises.*]

Mr. Anthony. No, you do not.——But tell Sir George, if you shou'd see him, that I cannot call on him this morning, because I shall be busy.

Mr. Euston. You shall be busy!

Mr. Anthony. Yes, I have got a little business to settle.

Mr. Euston. To be sure, *business* must be minded.

Mr. Anthony. But be particular in delivering my apology, for I wou'd not have his Lady affronted.

Mr. Euston. One wou'd not affront a *Lady* to be sure.—No—no—no!

Mr. Anthony. I wou'd not have her think I slight her.

Mr. Euston. No!—I am sure you wou'd not slight a *Lady*!—[*He coughs.*]—Good morning, brother!

Mr.

Mr. Anthony. Good morning.

Mr. Euston. We shall see you, perhaps, when your *business* is done!—Good morning, brother.—

[*Exit Mr. Euston, coughing.*]

[*Mr. Anthony pulls a letter out of his pocket.*]

Mr. Anthony. Yes—here is the challenge; and, truly, something noble in it.—He applauds my taking away the Lady, but says my manner was too rough.—I must retract some words.—My Lord, that cannot be.—[*Puts up the letter.*] And now for a few bequests to my relations, in case his Lordship should prove victorious.—It is well my will is already made——for he has scarcely given me time to——[*He writes, then throws down the pen.*]—What paternal weakness! [*Rises.*] How strange it is, that, although I *have* resisted, and *can*, with manly firmness, resist every innate pleading for that ungrateful boy I once called my son; that careless prodigal of a father's peace, and his own welfare—yet—when I consider myself as shortly to be an inhabitant of another world, and without the power to assist him—I wish—I wish——What?—Why, that heaven may then raise him up a friend to deal more gently with than I have done.—A friend, whose temper, whose *place* it better may become to forgive his faults than an offended father.—[*He takes the paper.*] In vain are the strugglings of Nature.—Justice—example—and my word, irrevocably past, silence its pretences.—[*He seals the paper, directs it, and looks at his watch.*] The time is almost expired, and I must pay a short visit to my new lodger, and be gone.—John!

Enter Servant.

Mr. Anthony. Is not this the time that the Lady gave me permission to wait on her?

Servant. The Lady sent word she wou'd wait on you, Sir.—This is the time; and, Sir, she is coming.

Mr. Anthony. Shew her in. [*Exit Servant.*

[*Mr. Anthony walks two or three turns, and then the Lady is shewn in*]

Mr. Anthony. I hope, Madam, my message did not disturb you?

Lady. Not at all, Sir.—I had asked permission to see you before I received it.—[*He draws chairs, and they sit.*]

Mr. Anthony. Well, Madam—Unless you have inquired of the servants, you are yet a stranger to my name and connections.

Lady. I am a stranger to them, Sir.—But your humanity must ever be engraved on my heart.

Mr. Anthony. Then, Madam, for the service you are pleased to acknowledge I have rendered you, all I request, in return, is your confidence.—Explain clearly to me the circumstances, the temptations that brought you into the situation from whence I released you!—Declare them with frankness, and tax my humanity yet farther; it shall not forsake you.—To encourage you to this confession, my name is —

Lady. Hold, Sir!—That is an information I cannot return—therefore let us wave it—and, as I can remain grateful for your goodness without knowing to *whom* I am indebted, so pity still my weakness and my miseries, without a farther knowledge of the wretched sufferer.

Mr. Anthony. Madam, you have imposed on me a task too hard.—'Tis true you have won my pity; but 'tis fit you shou'd *secure* it too.—And while explanations are reserved, *Doubt*, that hardener of the human heart, must be your enemy.

Lady. Alas! [*Rises.*]

Mr.

Mr. Anthony. Come—I wish not to exact too much—but I am a *man*, Madam, and with every frailty incident to the species: *suspicion* has its place.

Lady. I know I am an object of suspicion—but you are deceived in me—indeed you are.—Guilt never *harboured* in my heart.—Maternal tenderness, for two helpless infants, hurried me in a moment to do I know not what, rather than lose them.—A deed! the horror of which (although by the mercy of eternal Providence I have escaped its direst consequences) must ever cover me with blushes; and, shou'd indulgent heaven reserve me for a meeting with my husband, must, with remorse, damp every joy the fond, fond, interview would give!

Mr. Anthony. Be comforted.—[*Leading her to her seat.*] I mean not to increase, but soothe your grief.—Tell me but *who* you are, and *why* thus abandoned by all your relations, friends, and husband?—I can excuse the feelings of a mother—the sudden starts, or rather madness of resolution, formed by the excessive anguish of the soul.—Trust me, I can deal tenderly with human failings.—No frivolous curiosity, but a desire to serve you, thus urges me to entreat you will *unfold* yourself.

Lady. Oh, Sir, I have a husband, *I think*, who loves me.—Once I am sure he did.—My heart has never stray'd from *him*, since our fatal union.—What must that poor heart suffer, torn with remorse for the rash step my mad despair suggested to preserve my children!—Oh! in my bosom let his name lie hid, that none may know his wretched fortune in a hapless wife.

Mr. Anthony. Your reasons have satisfied me.---I do not ask your name.---Tell me but the *circumstances* that drove you to the state from whence

I re-

I released you—Be so far explicit, and I will ask no more.

Lady. Most willingly.—When first my husband saw me, I was friendless.—Compassion caused his love for me—Gratitude mine for him.—Forlorn and destitute, no kind relation, no tender benefactor taught my heart affection.—Unused to all the little offices of kindness, could they but endear the object who bestowed them?—Sense of obligation, never before excited, pressed on my thoughts, and soon was changed to love.—He scorned to violate the heart that was his own, and we were married.

Mr. Anthony. I find no room for accusation here.—Go on—go on, Madam.—What has alienated your husband from you, and left you thus destitute at present?—If you can resolve me that—if you still have acted with equal propriety, I am your friend—I have no censure for you.

Lady. But you will condemn my husband—even I must own *he* was to blame. Born of wealthy parents, the heir to large possessions, and I to none, when he married, all were given up, and he changed his state for mine.—We had no friend but in each other—yet happy was that state to *me*, till poverty surprised us; and the fond hope (which once he cherished) of paternal forgiveness, vanished from my husband.—Then all our days were bitter as they had before been happy—tears were my only food, and sighs were his—even *reproach* I have endured from him, for making him the friendless wretch he call'd himself.—Yet—yet, at our parting, oh! then he cancell'd all—for when the regiment, in which he served, was ordered from the kingdom, he hung upon me, clasped his poor children, begg'd our forgiveness for the thousand outrages distress at our misfortunes had caused him to commit—swore
that

that affection for us was the source of his impatience—prayed heaven to bless *us*, whatever might be his fate—nay, prayed that death might speedily be his doom, so that it turned his father's heart to us.

Mr. Anthony. And have you never apply'd to his father ?

Lady. Yes ; but all in vain ; and two months since, hearing my husband was made prisoner, (and destitute of every relief and every hope, while he remained so) I left my children and came to London, resolved, in *person*, to supplicate his father's bounty ; when I learnt (dire news) his father, visiting an estate abroad, was lost, and we left to despair.

Mr. Anthony. What do you say ?

Lady. Nay, do not blame him—I pardon him from my soul.—And as my husband, spite of his disobedience, loved him tenderly, I will ever give a tear in tribute to his memory.

Mr. Anthony. Without hesitation ! — without the smallest reserve, tell me your husband's name ! Is it Euston ?

Lady. It is !

Mr. Anthony. His father is not dead !—He lives, and pardons him this moment !

[*Embracing her.*

Mrs. Euston. You are his father !—I know it ! —I see it in your looks !

[*Kneeling.*

Mr. Anthony. And you shall henceforth see it in my actions !—Rise, rise, and behold [*Taking the paper from his pocket.*] where I this moment again disown'd him for my son, while the poor of every kind (except himself) I ever styled my children.—Oh ! charity, partially dealt, never more receive that heavenly virtue's title.—Here [*Pointing to the paper.*] I provide for you as a poor stranger, who never asked, and might not have

have deserved my bounty ; while, as a daughter, begging for an alms, I shut my heart, and sent your supplications back.—Where was the merit of my thousands given, while one poor wretch, from proud resentment, petitioned me in vain ?

Mrs. Euston. I dare not call myself your daughter !

Mr. Anthony. You *are* my daughter — and, when I have supplicated heaven to pardon my neglect of you, I'll ask your pardon, too.—You *are* my daughter—and let the infamy you have escaped serve only to make you more amiable——make you compassionate—compassionate to your own weak sex, in *whatsoever* suffering state you see them—They all were virtuous *once*, as well as you—and, had they met a father, might have been saved, like you.—For me—[*Pulls out his watch*] Bless me, how has the time flown !—My dear, I have an engagement I cannot postpone above half an hour—and that time I must dedicate to——Now, methinks, I would wish to live. [*Aside.*] Retire to your chamber. I will, if possible, be with you speedily.—Where your husband is, and in what poor place your children, I am impatient till I know—but now I cannot wait.—Retire, my child.—May we meet again in safety.—

[*He leads her to the door and she withdraws.*]

Mr. Anthony. Now where's the Colonel ?—I have just time to draw up a writing for him to sign when he arrives—and I'll about it instantly.—Oh ! with what transport does the human heart dislodge the unnatural guests, Malice and Resentment, to take to its warm recesses the mild inhabitant, peaceful Charity.—Yet even more welcome is the returning virtue, when thus 'tis strengthen'd by parental fondness. [*Exit.*]

End of the Fourth Act.

A C T V.

SCENE I.

An Apartment at Major Cyprus's

Enter Lady Harriet and Bloom meeting.

Lady Harriet.

WHAT success?—Will Sir George come?—
What a tedious time have you been gone!

Bloom. Dear madam, if you cou'd suppose
how obstinate Sir George was—and how I had to
beg, and to pray—

Lady Harriet. But will he come?

Bloom. Yes, madam—at last he said he wou'd.

Lady Harriet. Thank Heaven—Then I shall
have the unspeakable joy of giving him this!—

[Pulling out a letter.

Bloom. What! Sir George, madam?—Well,
I declare, I was at my wit's ends to know what
you cou'd want with Sir George.

Lady Harriet. To give him this letter, Bloom,
from Lady Euston to the Major, which you
so luckily found, and to have the extreme plea-
sure of informing him that I am not the only
object deserving his resentment—but that even his
wife of a few months—the whom the world says
he doats upon, and who has driven me from his
remembrance, is indiscreet as I have been—to see
with my own eyes his confusion—hear him re-
proach

proach her conduct, and make him own—He promised he'd come?

Bloom. Yes, ma'am—but not till I knelt down and swore your Ladyship was *dying*; suddenly taken ill; and cou'd not leave the world in peace till you had communicated something from your own lips to him.

Lady Harriet. You did right—just as I ordered you—And what did he say to that?

Bloom. [*After a long pause*] Why, he said,—“I will come to the poor unhappy wretch!”

Lady Harriet. Wretch!—Are you sure he said so?

Bloom. I am sure he said, “Poor” and “unhappy,” and then, you know, “wretch” follows of course.

Lady Harriet. Who will be *most* wretched, in a few moments, he or I?

Bloom. Very true, madam—I believe he'll find he has not changed for the better.

Lady Harriet. [*Looking at the letter.*] Confusion! What have you made me do?—You told me this letter was for the Major—it is directed to Sir Harry Harmless.

Bloom. Oh, that I shou'd not look at the direction!

Lady Harriet. No matter—this is even a greater dishonour to Sir George than were it to the Major, and will wound him deeper—But where is the Major then? He will not be engaged as I supposed—and may return.

Bloom. Oh, no, my Lady, that I dare say he won't—you need not fear—go into your chamber, madam, and make yourself easy till Sir George comes, and make yourself easy when he does come too—for, though the Major may not be with Lady Euston, I dare say he has his appointments

ments in some corner or another, as well as your Ladyship. [*Exeunt.*]

S C E N E II.

Mr. Anthony Euston's.

Enter Mr. Anthony Euston, and Colonel Downright.

Mr. Anthony. I have been waiting for you all day—What meant the few words in your letter?—Why is my meeting with his Lordship deferred?

Colonel Downright. I am just come from Lord Layton—a friend of his Lordship's, knowing I was acquainted with you, call'd and took me there—and, to tell you the truth, I think this business between you and his Lordship might be amicably and honourably settled—However, if you don't fight with *him*, you must fight with a mad-headed fellow I have left below—so which do you chuse?

Mr. Anthony. What do you mean?

Colonel Downright. Nay, you will have a worse chance than you would have had with his Lordship; for this man is a soldier, one who has been fighting for these four or five years past—besides, he's desperate—half mad; and has sworn, he'll either kill or be kill'd by you, *instantly*.

Mr. Anthony. Let him come—Who, and what is he?—What has he to demand of me?

[*Angrily.*]

Colonel Downright. Nay, don't be too violent neither—He's a poor unfortunate lad, I fancy—and, notwithstanding all his blustering—he now
and

and then looks so heart-wounded I can't help pitying him.

Mr. Anthony. But what's his business? What is his quarrel with me?

Colonel Downright. Lord Layton is the innocent cause of it—he told the young man, who came to his Lordship's (somewhat sooner than I did) in search of the Lady whom you took away, that the Lady had confessed herself poor—and even perishing for subsistence—and that, consequently, she was willing to resign herself to the most liberal—which you proving, in spite of his Lordship's generosity, you carried off the prize—and, egad, I owned it was what I had suspected, notwithstanding your grave countenance last night.

Mr. Anthony. You told him you thought so?

Colonel Downright. Yes—for I wished to turn the whole matter into a joke with his Lordship—I did not think, at the time, that the young fellow would have been so violent—for till this was explained he was as patient as a lamb; and only inquired, with *trembling* and *sighs*, for the Lady—but, when he heard what I said, egad, he laid hold of me, and swore, till I brought him to my friend, the “unpitying, vile purchaser of innocence,” (meaning you) he would not quit me—So here he has followed me through the streets—and, on condition that he would be patient while I came and announced him to you, I have promised him you shall give him satisfaction.

Mr. Anthony. What is this gentleman's name?
[*Anxiously.*]

Colonel Downright. He did not tell us.

Mr. Anthony. Does he know mine?

Colonel Downright. No; I thought it most prudent not to tell him; for, he's such a madman,
he

he might have bawled it as we came in the streets.

Mr. Anthony. [*Much embarrassed.*] What is he to the Lady?—Her brother?—her cousin?

Colonel Downright. Why, faith, I've a notion (though he did not say so) I have a notion he is her husband.

Mr. Anthony. Indeed! [*Starting.*]

Colonel Downright. Why you don't like the business the worse for that? 'Tis *crim. con.* now, and you'll be quite in the fashion.

Mr. Anthony. Let the young man come up—I'll withdraw for a moment—but do not give him to suppose I have *not* injured him.

Colonel Downright. That you may depend upon—I never tell a falsehood for myself, much less for another.

Mr. Anthony. Neither let him know my *name*. I'll first send the Lady to him, and then return myself.

Colonel Downright. He's coming.

[*Exit Mr. Anthony.*]

Charles. [*Without*] Where is this gentleman?

Colonel Downright. Walk in here, Sir.

Enter Charles Euston.

Colonel Downright. The man you wish to see—and whom you say has injured you—will be here, and give you satisfaction immediately.

Charles. I thank him—Then I shall die, and never see her more. [*Aside.*]—Oh, Sir! cooled with the restraint you have thus long imposed on me! I wish to ask a favour.—I thought I was resolved never again to behold the wretch I have been deprived of; but, my rage for a moment gone, I cannot think of dying, and she so near me, without once looking on her—I have come far to see her—suffered much—crossed half the East-

tern clime in poverty—have endured more pain, more toil, to gain my freedom, but to starve with her—and, dying, comfort her, than, had a throne been my waiting reward, my spirits cou'd have struggled with.—And, after all, I feel, I feel I could be repaid with a mere look—Then, why refuse me?—If I escape my antagonist, I have resolved on death! Let me, then, see her! I will not exchange a word with her—will they refuse her coming?

Colonel Downright. No—for here she is—

Enter Mrs. Euston, and stops (with emotion) as soon as she enters.

Mrs. Euston. I am commanded not to fly to your arms—I must not run to you, and tell you all I feel!

Charles. [*After a pause.*] I said—I thought—I wou'd not speak to you—but pity for your crimes and miseries compel me—And, I tell you, to alleviate your remorse, I *pardon you*—nay, perhaps, love you better, even in this agony of affliction, than if we had been blest with prosperous, virtuous days!—I know what you have suffered!—Your guilt convinces me!—I want no other plea from a heart like yours.—But where's your vile purchaser?—My rage returns!—I must die soon ---but first in his breast! [*Draws his sword.*]

Colonel Downright. He's here!---

Enter Mr. Anthony.

Charles. Then to his heart---[*Going to stab him, sees it is his father, and, after a pause, falls on his knees.*] My father!---

Mr. Anthony. Yes,---I am the man whose life
you

you seek.—And, as your father, you might pursue your purpose—But, as your wife's friend and preserver, still kneel to me; and receive her, virtuous, from my hands.—

Charles. [*Embracing her.*] Virtuous!—Virtuous!—O my father—Even groaning under your displeasure, ever dear, and revered!—What are you now, while heavenly consolation pours from your lips?—

Colonel Downright. Father and son!—Why then there's to be no battle at last!

Mr. Anthony. No—Hostilities are past—and may their future days know only peace!—My son—

[*Embracing him.*]

Charles. That tender name distracts me!—Let me be more composed—prepared—before I experience such unexpected happiness.—Maria, lead me from my father—Hereafter I will thank him; but now, I cannot.—

Mrs. Euston. Oh! Yes, my husband, kneel to him again!—Kneel for me! For your poor children! Saved from want and wretchedness!—From being orphans!—Kneel to him for us all!—preserved from infamy!—

Charles. O spare the recollection—I feel too much!—A poor forsaken, desperate, dying man, restored to love, to life, to *him* too—whose anger, (even while blest with thee) plung'd me in constant sorrow.—It is too much!

Mr. Anthony. I thought my heart had been—but—[*He falters and wipes his eyes.*]

Colonel Downright. What? Do you weep?—Now that affects me more than any thing that has been said or done yet.—I don't like to see a woman cry, but I can't bear to see a man—a man's tears flow from so deep a source—they always appear to have come a long journey, and therefore I

notice them as strangers, that have gone through fatigue and trouble on their way—While a woman's tears I consider as mere neighbours, that call upon you when they like, and generally drop in on all occasions. [*Exeunt.*]

S C E N E III.

Major Cyprus's.

Enter Lady Harriet and Bloom.

Lady Harriet. [*A loud rap.*] That is Sir George—Heavens!—

Bloom. Yes, my Lady, that it is—

Lady Harriet. Heavens! What a sensation—How am I agitated at his approach!—Could I have thought, a few hours ago, I shou'd ever see him again?—Speak to him again!—Oh this shame—

Bloom. Shame! Bless me!—One does feel a little ashamed sometimes on seeing a stranger; but, my Lady, Sir George is (as one may say) an *old acquaintance*.

Lady Harriet. I must retire for a moment—Do you receive him—and, before I return, give him to understand that I am *not* dying; but will come to him immediately. [*Exit.*]

Bloom. Well, now I declare I begin to be ashamed myself—Own all I swore to him on my knees was a falsehood?—Why, what will he say? Dear me, I'm quite alarmed! I must retire for a moment too!—[*Goes to the back of the stage. A servant shows Sir George in, and retires.*]

Sir George. How strange does it seem to me to find myself once more in this house, especially when I consider who resides here—Who? Perhaps,

haps, by this time, poor Lady Harriet is no more—How amiably did my dear Lady Euston enforce her dying request—I doubted the *rectitude* of complying with it—but she surmounted all my scruples, and her tenderness and generosity have endeared her to me more than ever.

Bloom comes down.

Sir George. How does Lady Harriet?

Bloom. As well as can be expected, Sir.

Sir George. How!

Bloom. I hope you won't be angry, Sir—but she's a *little* better.

Sir George. Angry!—No; I am very glad to hear it!

Bloom. Are you indeed, Sir? Why then I believe she is a *great deal* better.

Sir George. Indeed!—I am very glad; but then, if my attendance can be dispensed with—I may as well—

Major Cyprus. (*Without*) Let the chariot wait—perhaps, I may go out again.

Bloom. Oh! Oh! Oh! Oh! Oh!—that's the Major---that's my master!---my *other* master!---Oh, what will become of us all?

Sir George. How unlucky?

Bloom. Sir!—Dear Sir, hide yourself!

Sir George. Hide!

Bloom. On my knees I beg—Consider my poor *dying* Lady!

Major Cyprus. [*On the stairs.*] Go with that note immediately.

Bloom. Here!---in here, Sir, for Heaven's sake.

[*Opening the closet door.*]

Sir George. 'Sdeath!---What shall I do? See

him? Damnation!-- And see him *here* too? No, I can't bear it---I must avoid him.

[*Going towards the closet.*

Bloom. Here, Sir---here, quick! [*She puts Sir George into the closet and shuts the door.*]

Bloom. There, there he is! thank Heaven! For, if my poor Lady had lost the Major, she might never have got a third husband. Lord bless me, I'm just as terrified as if I had never been used to these sort of things! [*Exit to Lady Harriet.*

Enter Major Cyprus.

Major Cyprus. Ridiculed, baffled---laughed at ---disappointed! How Sir George will enjoy this! A fine figure I cut on my knees to Sir Harry, when the Colonel and his friends were shown in! And then my ridiculous vanity in wishing him to be unmasked, confidently expecting it was Euston's wife!-- Oh, damn it! I'll think no more of it; but as I am deprived the satisfaction of revenge on the Lady abroad, I'll e'en torment my Lady at home! [*Calls*] Lady Harriet---Lady Harriet.

Enter Lady Harriet and Bloom.

Major Cyprus. What's the matter? You tremble---you look pale!

Lady Harriet. [*trembling.*] Tremble!--Bless me---I've been fast asleep---and such a dream!--I thought I was falling---

Bloom. Ay, my Lady, I always dream of falling too!

Lady Harriet. [*Tawns and rubs her eyes.*] How long have you been come home?---What's o'clock? How long do you think I have slept, Bloom?

Bloom. I dare say, pretty near an hour and half, my Lady.

Lady

Lady Harriet. A miserable dull book, fell out of my hand! and I dropp'd insensibly.

Bloom. And with the candles so near your Ladyship! I'm sure your Ladyship was very lucky, you did not set yourself on fire!

Major Cyprus. Aye; does your Ladyship consider the danger with the lights so near you? You might have caught fire, and I shou'd have had all my valuable pictures and library consumed in an instant!

Lady Harriet. And I consumed too.

Major Cyprus. Aye, and your Ladyship.

Lady Harriet. Very true---but I am fond of reading melancholy books, that set me to sleep.

Major Cyprus. Then I desire for the future, you wou'd not read.

Lady Harriet. And don't you desire I wou'd not sleep too?---I'm very sorry you disturbed me.---Bloom, come and dispose the sofa, and the lights, I'm resolved I'll finish my nap.

Major Cyprus. But Mrs. Bloom, first order the French horns up---I'm out of spirits. [*Exit Bloom.*]

Lady Harriet. And do you imagine your horns will disturb my repose? I shall like them of all things, they lull me to sleep.

Major Cyprus. Like them or not, I will have them.

Lady Harriet. You shall---you shall have them.
[*Significantly.*] [*Exit.*]

Enter Servant.

Servant. Colonel Downright, Sir, with two gentlemen, strangers, desire to be admitted.

Major Cyprus. [*Aside.*] What can bring them here? They dare not come to laugh at me! No matter---I'll see them. [*Aloud.*] Shew them up.

Enter Colonel Downright, Mr. Euston, and Mr. Anthony Euston.

Colonel Downright. Major, these gentlemen, the Mr. Eustons, have begged me to introduce them to you, late as it is, on business in which they are materially---

Mr. Anthony. Sir---Major Cyprus, I beg your pardon---but I have received intelligence that my nephew, Sir George Euston, is in this house, and I am come to conduct him safe out of it.

Major Cyprus. Sir!---

Mr. Anthony. In short, Sir---Sir George Euston has been, by some unwarrantable means, led to pay a visit here, and I cannot leave the house until I see him---If I should, my niece, Lady Euston, will be highly alarmed (knowing you are at home) for her husband's safety.

Major Cyprus. Sir George in this house! Ridiculous supposition!

Mr. Euston. Call her Ladyship's woman---She deliver'd the message of invitation---I shall know her again, for I saw her---and I saw Sir George soon after follow her.

Major Cyprus. Bloom!----Bloom!----Where's Bloom?

Enter Bloom.

Pray were you at Sir George Euston's to-day, or this evening?

Bloom. I! At Sir George Euston's, Sir!

Mr. Euston. Yes: I saw you there.

Bloom. Oh! Oh! Oh! [*crying*] Oh dear!---I was not there indeed, Sir!

Major Cyprus. You see she denies it, and confirms the truth with her tears.

Mr. Anthony. I distrust them both---both her truth and her tears.

Major

Major Cyprus. Come, come, Mr. Anthony Euston, confess you were not brought hither to seek Sir George---Clear yourself, in your turn, from the suspicions I entertain of you. But, if you dare to avow yourself the contriver, or even abettor, of the affront offered me at the masquerade—

Mr. Euston. Major Cyprus! My brother Anthony knew no more of the appointment at the masquerade than the child unborn. But, bless you, my niece and we meant you no ill by it; we only meant to have a joke at your and Sir Harry's expence, that was all.

Major Cyprus. Then give me leave to tell you, Mr. Euston, and you also Mr. Anthony, that your present visit--

Mr. Anthony. We understand you, Sir---only assure us that Sir George Euston is safe, and we'll leave your house immediately.

Major Cyprus. I assure you that Sir George Euston is safe!

Mr. Anthony. You seem surprised---Let me then speak a word with Lady Harriet, whom the servants tell me is at home. Is she or not?

Major Cyprus. [*To a servant without.*] Desire your Lady to come hither---But have a care, gentlemen, how far you provoke me by your suspicions! For, by Heaven---

Mr. Anthony. I have no fears but for Sir George, nor will now your utmost rage induce me to quit the house till I am assured of his safety.

Major Cyprus. And pray, Sir, *who* in this house is to assure you of it?—

Sir George. [*Bursting from the closet.*] Himself!—

Major Cyprus. Confusion!

Mr.

Mr. Anthony. You see, Sir, my intelligence was good.—

Sir George. Strange as my concealment may appear, the cause was such as I can with honour reveal.

Major Cyprus. Then, pray Sir, with “honour reveal it.”

Sir George. Why then, I assure you, Major—and I assure you all—upon my honour—and on the word of a gentleman—that my being here—was—entirely—owing—to—to

Major Cyprus. [*Warmly.*]—To what?—To what, Sir?

Colonel Downright. “I’ll tell you what”—to “an undescribable something”---to be sure!

Major Cyprus. Damnation!

Colonel Downright. Did not I tell you to keep the key of the closet?---

Major Cyprus. Colonel, I beg---this is not a time---

Enter Bloom.

Bloom. [*To the Major.*] The horns are ready, Sir---wou’d you choose to have them?

Major Cyprus. No.---[*In a fury.*] *Exit Bloom,*

Enter Lady Euston and Lady Harriet, at opposite doors.

Lady Euston. Where is Sir George?

Mr. Euston. Here, my dear---just stepped out of the closet.

Lady Euston. What closet?

Colonel Downright. *That*—that very identical closet.

Major Cyprus. Heigh ho!—

Mr. Euston. Indeed, Lady Euston, you have cause to reproach him.

Lady

Lady Euston. I fear he will rather reproach me for this abrupt intrusion---but my apprehensions for his safety (hearing no tidings from his uncles) have alone impell'd me to it.

Lady Harriet. Had your Ladyship not written this letter to the amiable Sir Harry Harmless, (which I unfortunately supposed intended for Major Cyprus) your Ladyship's alarming "apprehensions" might have been spared, as I sent for Sir George but to shew him this letter.

Mr. Euston. And that letter was only a joke—a scheme to mortify the Major and Sir Harry.

Lady Euston. It was so—I own it.—And the confusion the scheme has occasioned, Sir George, needs all your forgiveness.

Sir George. I sincerely pardon it—and hope the whole company will do me the justice to believe, that my sole motive for entering this house was a compliance with, what I then thought, the dying request of that Lady.—And I now believe that her Ladyship's sole motive for wishing to see me was merely to shew me the letter of which she speaks—a copy of which, not without my knowledge, but against my opinion, was written by Lady Euston to Major Cyprus, appointing a fictitious interview, in return for his having dared to offend her with the profession of a licentious passion!

Major Cyprus. Sir George, I am perfectly satisfied with this explanation.—But, after what has happened, the world may despise me for being so, and therefore, Lady Harriet, from this moment we separate——And we had been wiser, as well as happier, if we had never met.

Lady Harriet. Most willingly separate---Your unkind treatment---and my own constant inquietude---have long since taught a woman of the world too feelingly to acknowledge, "No lasting friendship is form'd on vice."

Mr.

Mr. Anthony. Preach this, my dear Lady, to all your fair countrywomen---enforce your words by your future conduct, and they shall draw a veil over the frailty of your past life.

Lady Harriet. Oh ! Mr. Anthony, cou'd I but retrieve my innocence, my honour, for ever lost !

Mr. Anthony. Yet, do not despair.---You can still possess *one* inestimable good---that inborn virtue which *never perishes*---which never leaves us but to return.—For, when you think it extinguished, feel but due remorse, and it rises again in the soul.

Mr. Euston. That's right, brother Anthony—comfort her—it is your duty.—And we are all *relations*, you know—the whole company are related to one another.—Though it is in an odd kind of a jumbled way—I wish some learned gentleman of the law would tell us *what* relations we all are---and what relation the child of a first husband is to his mother's second husband, while his own father is living.

Mr. Anthony. Brother, you think too deeply.

Mr. Euston. Not at all, brother Anthony !---And, for fear the gentlemen of the long robe shou'd not be able to find out the present company's *affinity*, let us appeal to the *kindred ties* of each other's passions, weaknesses, and imperfections ; and, thereupon, agree to part, this evening, not only *near relations*, but *good friends*.

E P I L O G U E.

Written by GEORGE COLMAN, Esq.

Spoken by Miss FARREN.

MALE Critics applaud to the skies the male scribblers—

When a woman attempts, they turn carpers and nibblers;
But a true Patriot Female, there's nothing so vexes,
As this haughty pre-eminence claim'd 'twixt the sexes,
The free spirit revolts at each hard proposition,
And meets the whole system with loud opposition.
Men, 'tis true, in their noddles huge treasures may hoard
But the *Heart* of a woman with passions is stor'd.
With passions not copied from Latin or Greek,
Which the language of Nature in plain English speak.
Girls who grieve, or rejoice, from true feeling, as I do,
Never dream of Calypso, or Helen, or Dido.

To the end of our life, from the hour we begin it,
Woman's fate all depends on the critical minute;
A minute unknown to the dull pedant tribe:
And which, never feeling, they never describe.
'Tis no work of science, or sparkle of wit,
But a point which mere Nature must teach us to hit;
And which, in the changes and turns of my story,
A weak woman's pen has to-night laid before ye.
And say, ye grave prudes! gay coquettes too, ah say,
What a critical minute was mine in the play!
Here poverty, famine, and shame, and reproach;
There plenty and ease, and a Lord and a coach.
But perhaps our Bard held Mrs. Euston too mean,
And conceiv'd her disgrace wou'd but lower the scene:
Let us then, better pleas'd to acquit than convict her,
On the ground of high life sketch the very same picture!

Imagine .

E P I L O G U E.

Imagine some fair, plung'd in modish distress,
Her wants not less than mine, nor her agony less.
At hazard, suppose, an unfortunate cast,
Has swept her last guinea, nay, more than her last.
Her diamonds all mortgag'd, her equipage sold,
Her husband undone, genteel friends looking cold ;
At her feet his sweet person Lord Foppington throws,
The most handsome of nobles, the richest of beaux !
At once too his Love and his bounty dispenses,
Sooths with thousands her grief, lulls with flatt'ry her
senses.

Alas, what a minute ! Ah ! What can be done ?
All means must be tried, and our drama shews one.
Let papa in that minute, that so frowns upon her,
Redeem the vile debts that encumber her honour !
Let papa in that minute that teems with undoing,
Step in like my father, and marr a Lord's wooing !
Let her know, as I've known, all the horror that's in it,
And feel the true force of the critical minute !

Thus wishes our bard, as she bids me declare ;
And such is my wish, by my *Honour* I swear.

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